

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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After a few days of quiet reflection after my release by the C.I.D. on the 17th of November and in order to assess the recent events and the irreparable damage done by the police to my personality and ministry in Vavuniya, I thought it proper that I should release this present report. This is necessary in the interests of social justice for which I fearlessly stood up during these long years of my Christian Ministry.

First of all who released these press reports except the police and the C.I.D.? Within a few minutes after the arrests, reports were released in such a manner that the local press feasted on them and produced newspaper reading material defaming and disgracing christian clergy. This kind of defamation and humiliation cannot be easily repaired. This caused all kinds of rumours floating in the air and alienations in church and society. There are some Police officers even of high rank who lack decency and restraint in conversation.

The English word "violence" comes from the Latin word "Violare" which means "to violate". Whatever "Violates" another in the sense of infringing upon or disregarding or abusing or denying that other, whether physical harm is involved or not, has to be understood as an act of violence. Violation of personhood can take place even when no overt physical harm is being done. Any act which depersonalizes the other would be an act of violence. It transforms a person into a thing as Simone Weil has suggested.

The day after Deepavali

Deepavali 14th November was a Sunday. The Hindus of the Vanni were celebrating the victory of light and justice over the forces of darkness and diabolical wickedness. It was a busy day for me with Eucharistic services in Vavuniya and Thanni-

yoothu in Mullaitivu. Monday 15th was a day of rest and I had just finished my morning-devotions. Just past ten in the morning eight police officers jumped with guns out of a jeep and were at my door step demanding that my house be searched and I be taken to the police station for questioning.

When I asked for a written authority or warrant from a senior officer they went back to the jeep and communicated with an A.S.P. and I heard in Sinhala that my house be searched at once and I be brought even by force. They then ransacked all the rooms of my house, pulling out everything from almirahs, drawers, suitcases and boxes. They took 17 cassettes, about 50 christmas cards, my savings bank book and bank receipts. The search went on for two hours. No cooking was done at home.

At 12 noon they took me by jeep surrounded by armed policemen to the Vavuniya police station and I was kept there waiting in a room without lunch till 3.30 p.m. Fr. Soosainayagam from Chettikulam was also brought and kept in another room. The words of Jesus in Gettsamane which I read in the morning flashed through my mind again and again as I was waiting:-

"Have you come out as against a robber

With swords and clubs?

But this is your hour and the power of darkness".

"Two tigers in cassocks"

At a slight distance I overheard a remark by a Sinhala police officer "Adtha loguwa antheppu kottithennek api allala"(today we have caught two tigers in cassocks). At 3.30 p.m. I was told that the D.I.G. Jaffna has ordered me to be brought immediately to Jaffna. I protested to the officer who took down my statement about the very humiliating and disgraceful manner in which

Anglican priest tells his story : 3 days with the Police & C.I.D.

my house was searched and I was brought to the police station and kept without lunch from 12.00 to 3.30 p.m. I told the officer that I must stop at home for lunch and have a word with my wife before I leave for Jaffna. The police mini bus with armed policemen stopped at my residence and I was allowed to have my lunch fully guarded. They would not allow me to talk to my wife and kept on following me.

Fr. Soosainayagam and I were brought to the Jaffna police station just after 6.30 p.m. We were told to wait for the C.I.D. Gurunagar. No C.I.D. officers came that night and we were made to sit on two chairs without sleep counting the hours till dawn. The Jaffna police toilet has no bulbs and it was all dark in the night and in the early hours of the morning there was not even water available. I thought it was an area for development for President J.R. to provide basic human needs and humane conditions in police stations. We were kept waiting till 12-30 noon on Tuesday to be stared at with suspicion by all those who came to the police station. At 12.45 the C.I.D. came and took us to Gurunagar.

Our meals were kindly supplied from Bishop's House Jaffna.

At Gurunagar Army Camp

Till 4.00 p.m. on Tuesday 16th I was seated on a chair. I reached out for a newspaper on the table. An officer quickly walked up and said "Stop reading Father" and snatched the newspaper. I then began observing and reflecting on the atmosphere and the environment at Gurunagar Camp. At the Jaffna police station there were many Tamil officers and the Tamil Language was spoken. I knew I was in Jaffna, the capital city of the Tamil people. But Gurunagar Camp was almost entirely manned by Sinhalese including minor employees and canteen boys. I was wondering whether I was in Jaffna or Matara.

With my competence in all three languages I could sensitively catch the Sinhala chauvinistic nuances, undercurrents, overtones and remarks. I could hear in Sinhala "we must bring here five more tiger priests". Minor employees too made similar remarks. The whole atmosphere reeked of anti-Tamil hatred. The vast credibility gap and mental blocks created by

power hungry politicians through the years were poignantly evident.

I grieved that the problem has been worsened and made too deep even for tears. The inmates of Gurunagar were mostly products of the anti-Tamil environment and education they received after the 50's and the prejudices, ideas and feelings they exhibited so spontaneously and naturally were the outcome of such a formation. As an educationalist I felt extremely sad at the scene which was only an epitome of the larger Sinhala society in the south. Many of the C.I.D. officers appeared to me, who was a professor in a Seminary for over 15 years, as blissfully ignorant of the political, social, economic history and the growth of nationalism of the Tamil people. Probably they are kept in such ignorance as it is of advantage for those in power to continue to maintain their domestic power by the police force and army that harass and intimidate the people of the North from time to time.

Mixing up Eelam with Tigers

At the first questioning by the C.I.D. officers at 4.00 p.m. on Tuesday, I

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Community development activities and socio-economic research activities carried out by organisations like "Sarvodaya" and "Marga" with the assist-

DEATHS

PATHMANAYAGAM — son of Mr. & Mrs. Kanapathipillai of Alvay and Alaveddi and presently of No. 1, Cranborne Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey, U. K., expired on Friday, 26th November, 1982 in a motor accident. Funeral took place at Surrey 1st December, 1982. He was a Science Teacher at Jaffna Hindu College during the 1970s and then at Rivermead College, Surrey.

ance of foreign based non-governmental funding agencies have been started very early in the Sinhalese areas.

Despite discouragement and pressure from various governmental and non-governmental sectors, foreign funding agencies started to extend their helping hand to Tamil-speaking areas (i.e., Northern and Eastern Provinces) mainly after the calamities caused by the 1977 communal riots and 1978 cyclone which struck the coastal areas of the Eastern Province.

The frequent eruptions of communal riots under the present regime resulted in the exodus of Tamil-speaking plantation work-

consider their present involvement in Visvamadu, the request of Minister Thondaman himself was one. Various Church Organizations also had shown tremendous interest in refugee rehabilitation activities in Vanni District.

In the Eastern Province similar involvement of Red Barna and Church Organizations to help the poor and affected people were started mainly after the cyclone disaster of the eastern coast in November 1978. Red Barna (Save the Children-Norway) have played a very prominent role in the rehabilitation of Vellaveli area of the Paddiruppu electorate.

The attitude of the Government Departments

by **V. S. Jayapalan**

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ers of recent Indian origin, from the hill country districts. These refugees have mainly moved to the jungle covered Vanni Districts in the Northern Province. The involvement of UNP officials and M.Ps in these dastardly and cruel attacks on the Tamils were even admitted by the President of Sri Lanka, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, but so far no action has been taken against these Members of the governing party.

Because the government organizations failed to fulfill their duties with regard to rehabilitation of the displaced Tamil refugees, the Tamil Refugees Rehabilitation Organization (TRRO) was formed in the midst of the 1977 communal riots to rehabilitate these people. This has been co-ordinated with the Vavuniya based Gandhiyam Movement—started in 1976 and both fostered refugee settlements and community development activities in the Vanni District. With a similar intention the Red Barna Movement also moved into the Vanni District in 1979. They have started a settlement mainly for displaced estate workers at Visvamadu. Among the various suggestions and requests which inspired the Red Barna Movement to

and Organizations during the above calamities was highly immoral. They deliberately diverted foreign funds from the areas for which they were meant. The most affected areas due to the cyclone was the Batticaloa District and the coastal Tamil speaking areas (Muslim dominant areas) of Amparai District. But Government extended these cyclone affected areas to include the adjoining Sinhalese Districts by a Gazette Notification and had directed most of the supplies to those Sinhalese speaking areas. It is in this background that one could understand the reason why the involvements and the contributions of the Tamil Ilaingar Peravai, GUES, University Students Movements, TRRO, the Christian Churches and Muslim Organizations were very important. While these organizations were involved in the immediate relief work, the Red Barna was concerned with the long term rehabilitation.

This was the situation during the various communal riots too. Most of the Government Organizations just neglected their basic social duties. This is why the involvement of TRRO, Gandhiyam, Red

(Continued on page 11)

"Behold the man!" said a pitiful Pontius Pilate, pointing at Jesus of Nazareth wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, to the tumultuous Jews, who answered him.

"We have a law, and by our law he ought to die...."

Were the Jews right...? Were truth, justice and equity upheld by the Jews in the pursuance of their law? The chief priests carried the day, but the story of Jesus of Nazareth did not end at Golgotha.

It is not that historical moral blameworthiness can be attributed to the Jews, but can anybody be heard to say that the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth was justified because it was legal? Where was truth? Where was justice? Where was equity?

All laws are not truthful, just and equitable. All laws are not politically acceptable. There are laws which are discriminatory and oppressive. There are laws which legalise genocide and murder. There are laws that are an infringement of the freedom and liberties and even the franchise of individuals and organisations, religious groups and political parties, minority sections and nationalities.

NOT ALL LAWS ARE THE SAME

The laws of all the countries are not the same. Some countries have laws which somewhat conform to the requirements of—say the UN charter of human rights. There are many others with laws whose enforcement would only be a blatant violation of human and democratic rights. The international community does not fail to express concern about the human right situation in these countries. But what options have the people living under legal oppression in these countries?

Have they no option but to meekly submit to political intolerance, legalised genocide and judicial murder? Have they no right to stand up against state terrorism? Have they no right to organise themselves to campaign against unjust laws and their brutal enforcement? Have they no right to be permitted to be led by the articulate sections of their own population in their struggle for justice and equality without which any search for the ultimate truth

would be meaningless?

When a whole society stands oppressed and terrorised, albeit legally, can any member of that society who upholds truth, justice and equality, claim immunity on the grounds of *non expedit*? Can immunity be enforced on the clergy in that society on the grounds of *non expedit*?

It is part of Italian history that the lifting in 1919 of the papal decree of *non expedit* which had precluded the Italian Catholics from voting at the elections, had itself been preceded by the founding of the Italian Popular Party by a Sicilian Catholic Priest Luigi Sturzo. It was

"The history of the struggle for the recognition of language rights in various countries of the world is part of man's struggle for freedom and equality, and is an inspiring and ennobling chapter of the human story....In the vanguard of the struggle have been the intellectuals and the clergy of every country. The catholic clergy in Canada, in Belgium, in Ireland, in Poland, in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia, in the Basque country; the Protestant Ministers in Wales and Scotland, no less than the Muslim Mullahs in Pakistan, the Hindu

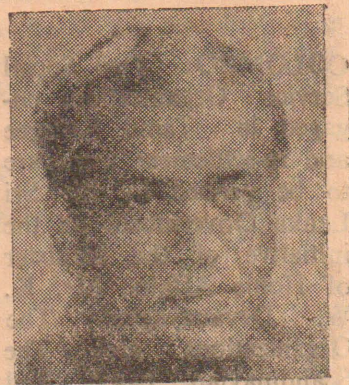
The late Bishop Leo in one of his articles written in 1972, said as follows,

"Camillo Torres, priest and guerilla fighter, used to say half-jokingly, 'A Catholic who is not revolutionary and who is not with the revolutionaries is in mortal sin.'" This may be an exaggerated statement even to be said jokingly, but it gives us the clue as to what the role of the church should be in Sri Lanka where rapid and, in a sense, revolutionary changes are taking place.... Involvement in action to change unjust structures, political involvement, action to

El Salvador are of course pitted against its ruling Cabal. The memory of Archbishop Romero will forever be a powerful inspiration to the freedom fighters. Can anybody be heard to condemn the followers of Romero and condone the consequences inflicted upon them by the law enforcing agencies of El Salvador? Can those who claim to uphold truth, justice and equity be heard to condone the brutal battering, raping and killing of four American nuns, in the wake of the murder of Remero, by El Salvadorian troops in consequence of El Salvadorian law?

Will those who hold that all of a country's laws

Clergy in politics : Jesus too was crucified under the law!



Fr. Thani Nayagam

left for Sturzo to hail Leo XIII as the "venerable, august and beloved pope of Christian Democracy" and to subsequently note that under Pius X, Leo's successor, "orthodoxy has become a preoccupation bordering on mania". The involvement of Roman Catholic clergy in politics and in the affairs of the State, is as old as the Church itself. From the

priests in India, the Buddhist Sangha in Ceylon, have been conspicuous in the promotion of language rights"

Twenty five years later: Ceylon has given way to Sri Lanka, but the identity of the Sri Lankan State with the whole island is under increasing challenge from the Tamil nation—a transformation of what began as a mere language

bring about land reform etc. should be the ordinary means of disciplining the Christian to a full spiritual life."

Political involvement in the struggle against discrimination, oppression and exploitation, obviously means the violation of the country's laws which are discriminatory, oppressive and exploitative. The custodians of such laws

are unquestionably supreme also condemn the Church in Poland for its arguably illegal spiritual hold and political power over the Polish people? Or will they support Ferdinand Marcos's criticisms against Cardinal Sin, his Church and his clergy in their struggle against the military rule in the Philippines? Or will the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka, in these days of retrospective legislation and punishment, retrospectively criticise itself for defying the law relating to the Nationalisation of schools in the early nineteen sixties?

As people living in a country whose government is a signatory to the UN Covenants relating to civil political and cultural rights we have to remind ourselves of one of the Articles of the UN Charter which stipulates as follows:

"It is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the Rule of Law."

In most circumstances, the rebellion of a people or acts of political violence by

by

Amali

crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth up till the incarceration in Jaffna of Fr. Singarayer (Tamilized version of Leo), the long and chequered history of the Church is replete with innumerable instances of political involvement of the clergy.

Twenty five years ago in this very country, then called Ceylon, a lone Catholic Priest ventured to play his part in the struggle for the language rights of the Tamil minorities. It was Fr. Thani Nayagam who pitted himself against the Sinhala Only Law and in the process pitted himself against the mania of orthodoxy of the indigenous Church itself. Justifying his involvement, he wrote

question into a seemingly irresolvable national question!! Vatican 2 has thrown open new vistas before the Catholic clergy and zealous priests and prelates have taken up positions to respond to everything that is genuinely human.

The late Bishop Leo, Fathers Balasuriya, Caspersz and Joachimpillai to mention a few led the way in Sri Lanka in positively responding to Vatican II. In the northern and the eastern parts of the island where the struggle against national oppression supervenes over everything else, the young priests have thrown themselves into the movement for the right of self-determination.

will no doubt insist that the transgressors will have to take the consequences of their actions. But, can those who claim to uphold truth, justice and equity be found to be condoning such consequences, or be found to be shamelessly or shamefully it does not matter which—offering sops to the oppressors?

Not long ago in El Salvador, Archbishop Oscar Amulfo Romero was gunned while saying Mass. The assassination was attributed to rightist forces ultimately leading to the death squad leader Major Roberto D' Aubuisson, who is now a member of the country's ruling Cabal which is the law giver and executor in that country. The mass of the people of

(Continued overleaf)

COLOMBO: The Sri Lanka Government had requested the Government of United States to recall the First Secretary (Political) of the U.S. Embassy in Colombo, Mr. Kenneth Monro Scott (Jr). Cabinet Spokesman and Minister of State, Mr. Anandatissa de Alwis said that Foreign Minister, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed, was meeting the U.S. Ambassador, in this connection. The U.S. Diplomat is alleged to have made a statement about the internal affairs of the country which the Government thought were unwarranted.

'Saturday Review' learns that there were also suspicions that Mr. Scott had exhibited sympathies towards the Tamil cause in Sri Lanka.

COLOMBO: Two Social Service Organizations engaged in Tamil Refugee and re-settlement work are to be probed by the Sri Lanka Government on the initiative of the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. K. W. Devanayagam. The Organizations are: The Scandinavian based "Red Barna" which undertakes Community Development work in the east and "Gandhiyam" which has been looking after the rehabilitation of Tamil Refugees affected by race riots in the hill country. Mr. Devanayagam is believed to have alleged that these two Organizations have secret links with the Tamil Separatist movement.

NEW DELHI: A delegation of eminent writers from different countries will participate in a series of functions in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry as part of the Subramania Bharathi Centenary Celebrations in the first week of December. The delegation sponsored by the World Peace Council will attend a seminar in Madurai on "Contemporary relevance of Bharathi" and then visit places with which the Poet was associated. The delegation will also participate in the Bharathi Festival organized by the Government in Pondicherry on December 11th and in Madras on December 12th.

NEW DELHI: The Internationally known Sitar Maestro Pandit Ravi Shankar who has lived abroad for more than two decades has decided to settle down in India.

NEWS BRIEFS

JAFFNA: A foreman at the Kankesanthurai Cement Factory (Third Stage) Mr. W. T. Rajkumar of Rakka Road, Chundikuli was stabbed to death last week in the factory premises. Three suspects all Temporary Security Guards A. R. Wijeratne, M. Jayatissa and Kandiah Nadesu have been remanded in this connection. Following this incident the canteen at the work-site and the quarters of the Security Staff were attacked and damaged. The Leader of the Opposition, Mr. A. Amirthalingam, has con-

tacted the President and asked for a full inquiry.

NEW DELHI: SELVAGOWRI VARATHAKUMAR of Sri Lanka came sixth in the 100 metres hurdles final for women at the Asian Games held here. She clocked 14.65 seconds and the event was won by EMI AKIMOTO of Japan. Although Selvagowri failed to get a place in the final she turned the best performance for Sri Lanka at the Asian Meet.

COLOMBO: The Independent Groups which held office at the Colombo University Students' Council has again won a majority in all the faculties at the Colombo University Elections except the Arts Faculty. The following are the results: Science Faculty Independents - 11, JVP - 7; Law Faculty: Independents 7, JVP - 1, UNP - 1, SLFP - 1, Education Faculty: Independents - 9, UNP - 5, Arts Faculty: JVP - 11, Independents - 9, UNP - 7, SLFP - 5, MEDICAL FACULTY: Independents - 7, Pioneers 14.

The Independents may manage to capture the Students' Council unless the JVP, SLFP and the UNP Groups combine to thwart them.

LONDON: Small Arms and Helicopters made in India are likely to be purchased by a private concern here for sale to third

countries. The British Concern has indicated that it would buy one million pieces of rifle cartridges and another 27 defence items including Mortars, guns and ammunition.

MADRAS: While the Attenborough Film on Mahatma Gandhi has been hailed as a cinematic triumph in India, there is another British Film on India under preparation which has caused a lot of interest. The Film is to be made on E. M. Forster's Classic "A PASSAGE TO INDIA" The Film is to be directed by David Lean of "LAWRENCE OF ARABIA" and "DR. ZHIVAGO" fame.

COLOMBO: The results of the forthcoming Referendum will be announced District-wise and the final results before noon on December 23rd according to the Commissioner of Elections, Mr. Chandrananda de Silva.

The truth burns...

The truth burns
so they turned
their faces away
from the sun....

When small liberties
began to fray....
When their constitution
was being chipped away
When their newspapers
were shut down....
When their rule of law
was twisted round....
When might became right
and their friends
were carried off screaming
in the pitch of the night....

They chose silence
feigned blindness
pleaded ignorance.

And now when the shadow
of the jackboot hangs
ominous over their beloved land
they walk as zombies
unable to distinguish right from
wrong from right
their minds furred with lichens
like the dark side of trees.

The truth burns
so they turned
their faces away
from the sun....

By Courtesy :
Cecil Rajendra
Malaysia.



Clergy in politics....

(Continued from page 3)

sections of society are caused by the violations of human rights by the State and by the absence of the Rule of Law.

Political violence is also the outgrowth of unresolv-

ed political questions. Without resolving the latter, to seek to overpower political terrorism by the counter-terrorism of the state, would be dangerously counter-productive.

No useful purpose will be served by merely con-

demning violence in the abstract. Theoretically it would be untenable to do so, for, violence in the course of defence of one's own person or in the course of a just war, is not indefensible.

In the proclamation of

allegiance to truth, justice and equity, if one is merely seeking to play the role of a pulpiteer, the most topical subject for a sermon would be the 'Defence of Democracy', a threat to which has arisen, in the present instance, in the form of a referendum.

The Bourbons of France, it has been said, learnt nothing and forgot nothing in an epoch of tumultuous change. The Bandaranaiques of Sri Lanka also appear to have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing in a "period of rapid transition."

I have in mind particularly the mother and son duo. Thrust on Sri Lanka's political stage by a combination of circumstances, they now seem unable or unwilling to play the role expected of them. It cannot be a case of stage-fright because they are both veteran political actors; rather, it seems to be that they are under Saturnic or satanic influences!

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party's present discomfitures have their origins not in the action taken by the Government against Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike in October 1980 but in the deliberate break-up of the United Front in 1975.

This action constituted a betrayal of the mass movement in Sri Lanka for political, economic and social liberation of which the Bandaranaiques have become the symbol and the trustees by virtue of the fact that Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike had been there at a crucial time to give it leadership and direction.

NO REFORMS OF ANY CONSEQUENCE

By the mid-1970s the mass movement in the country had begun to press right upon the confining capitalist framework. The introduction of land reform and the nationalisation of the British-owned plantations, which had not even found mention in the United Front manifesto of 1970, has been cited as evidence of the pressure of the mass movement in its flow.

Referring to the many advances made between 1956-65 and 1970-77, one of the President's biographers, T. D. S. A. Dissanaike said in his "J. R. Jayewardene of Sri Lanka": "Successive UNP administrations of which he was an important member produced no reforms of any consequence whereas SLFP administrations which covered approximately the same number of years initiated far-reaching reforms in almost every sphere of human activity."

Yet again he said, "No reference to the period 1970-77 is complete without paying handsome tribute Mrs. of Bandaranaike for

Political Causerie

by **Gamini Navaratne**

the courage in systematically removing fetters of servitude which stemmed from the legacies of British colonialism. She ushered in more reforms during those seven years than all previous Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka had collectively and for those services earned the admiration of Mr. Jayewardene."



"She fell into the trap"

Mr. Jayewardene, according to Dissanaike, was "convinced that capitalism was at the end of its period of usefulness in Sri Lanka as the capitalist class, both local and foreign, were parasites of society."

Local and foreign vested interests however, did not give up the struggle; they did everything possible to delay, disrupt and even reverse these advances which were designed to usher in a new political, economic and social order in Sri Lanka, one far removed from the neo-colonial type, subservient to foreign interests and controlled by an English-educated Western-oriented elite, that existed up to 1956.

Mrs. Bandaranaike aided and abetted by Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, played into their hands by forcing the LSSP out of the Government.

The late Dr. N. M. Perera alleged at the time that the United States of America had a big hand in this development. Certainly, Washington was happy at the exit of the Marxists: the then US Ambassador Mr. Christopher Van Hollen described the relations with Sri Lanka thereafter

as "very good" while a few years earlier the relations were under considerable strain.

In the next two years, the forces opposed to the mass movement were able to gain the upper hand and finally inflict a humiliating defeat on the SLFP in 1977. Mrs. Bandaranaike had only herself to blame.

Subsequent developments where Mrs. Bandaranaike is concerned are too recent to need recounting. The

not gradually alienate them one by one.

What a difference it could have made to party unity if she had, forgetting past differences, said a public "Thank you" to Mr. Mathripala Senanayake for the part he played in the SLFP Presidential campaign and welcomed him back without laying down her own terms.

The Referendum is fast approaching. Will Mrs. Bandaranaike be able to pull the party together in

a party base. He must bide his time and avoid committing blunders that could spoil his career.

What is young Anura's record to date?

He displayed a vaulting ambition by making a bid for the Kalawewa parliamentary seat at the 1974 byelection. He was apparently encouraged by indications that the UNP would not put up a candidate if he was nominated. The SLFP nomination board, which was chaired by Mr. Mathripala Senanayake, opted for a candidate of the area, as demanded by the people. He then fell out with Mr. Senanayake.

After Mrs. Bandaranaike was forced to vacate the Attanagalla seat in 1980, he sought nomination to it

Have both mother & son failed?

deprivation of civic rights no doubt cramped her style. Still, with wise leadership, with correct leadership, particularly by keeping her family members with political ambitions firmly in place, she could have retrieved lost ground. Instead, she fell into the trap laid for her by the UNP. The result was the split in the party.

Women are supposed to have very suspicious minds. Mrs. Bandaranaike appears to be particularly prone in this regard. But if a party leader begins suspecting everyone, then that party can only but flounder, as the SLFP has been doing in the past two years.

I have said in this column "earlier that the SLFP is where Mrs. Bandaranaike is". But this does not imply that the party is her family property. A party leader cannot expect to impose his or her will on the followers ignoring their wishes, particularly when out of power. Mrs. Bandaranaike should learn to work in harmony and co-operation with politicians who have made significant contributions to the party in the past and stood by her loyally, ignoring and forgiving occasional lapses,

time and give the leadership that the mass movement that I have referred to requires of her?

UNIQUE BEING

Now to come to the SON. Thirtyfour-year Mr. Anura Bandaranaike is unique in one way: he is the



only son to have had both father and mother as Prime Ministers. Handsome, articulate, educated and wealthy, just now he is one of Sri Lanka's most eligible bachelors. He has every reason and right to believe that he is destined for high office.

But high office will not come on a platter, just because he is a Bandaranaike. He has to work for it, like his father did, work among the people and build up a following and

clashing not only with his sister Chandrika, who also made a bid for it, but also bringing into the open the dissension in the family, which finally led to the dissension and the split in the party itself. He may have believed that as the only male in the family he had a prior claim to the seat first represented by his father. But the tussle left the party weakened.

Then he tagged along for some time with the faction led by Mr. Senanayake, affirming repeatedly that he would not go back to the Mother unless all those who had broken away were taken back. But, suddenly, he left Mr. Senanayake and the others in the lurch and returned like the prodigal son. He cannot blame any party-men for not welcoming him like a conquering hero.

Finally, there was the Presidential election. I do not believe the newspaper reports that Anura sought nomination as the party candidate and that he was encouraged by his mother. Age alone would have served to deal a knockout blow if he came forward. That there was big tussle for the nomination, however, there is no doubt. In the end, Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa was selected. It then became the duty of every party mem-

(Continued on page 7)



Provisional National Committee for a Mass Workers Party writes to President Jayawardene

referendum

The Provisional National Committee For A Mass Workers Party has sent the following communication to President Jayawardene with copies to all members of Parliament. The letter has been signed by Messrs Bala Tampoe and Keerthi Seneviratne, Joint Secretaries.

"On 20th October, the day on which the presidential election was held, you proclaimed a 'State of Emergency' under the Public Security Act, which was made out to be for the purpose of preventing or at least checking 'post-election violence'.

"On 2nd November 1982, you were reported in a Government communique, to have announced to the Government Parliamentary Group that you had changed your mind about holding a General Election. You were said to have decided instead, to call for a Referendum, to extend the term of office of the present Parliament for a period of six years, beyond the date (August 4, 1983) on which it was to stand dissolved, "unless sooner dissolved", under the Constitution your Government established in the present Parliament, in August 1978.

"Following your announcement, the "Fourth Amendment" was passed in Parliament, and a Referendum is now to be held on 22nd December 1982, to obtain endorsement of your decision to keep the present Parliament for another six years, unless you decide to dissolve it earlier.

"In the meantime and up to now, 'Emergency' powers have been used to shut down two newspapers controlled by political parties opposed to your Government, namely, the 'Suthanthiran' and the

'Aththa'. Certain printing presses used by Opposition parties in the presidential election campaign have been sealed. Arrests by the Police and detention under the 'Emergency' regulations of several active political opponents of your Government, including the General Secretary of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, have also taken place. Now your Government has decided to extend the 'State of Emergency' on grounds other than those on which it was originally proclaimed.

"The Provisional National Committee for a Mass Workers' Party points out that physical attacks upon supporters of the Opposition parties and trade unionists by thugs, and attacks upon their property, have taken place on a considerable scale, despite the proclamation of the 'State of Emergency'.

"The other actions that have taken place, in the purported exercise of 'Emergency' powers, affecting the freedom of the press and the freedom of action of political parties opposed to your Government, have created conditions under which democratic opposition to your Government's proposal in the Referendum cannot be freely mobilised.

"In any case, we have to inform you, on behalf of the Provisional National Committee for a Mass Workers' Party, of our complete opposition to the holding of a Referendum for the purpose of preventing a general election, that you yourself had promised before the presidential election, and had purported to guarantee under the Constitution you established in 1978, by August 1983.

"You have requested and obtained the undated resignations, in advance,

of all the members of Parliament of your Party. If you are successful in obtaining even a bare majority for the "Fourth Amendment" at the Referendum, your Government

will not only retain its five-sixths majority in Parliament for a further six years, but that majority will be appointed by you and thus be answerable to you alone. The UNP members of Parliament will bear no responsibility to the people but have to be maintained at public expense. You will thus be able to exercise legislative power through that majority in addition to the executive powers vested in you, under the Constitution you devised.

"The Provisional National Committee for a Mass Workers' Party consequently denounces the decision to change the Constitution by a Referendum, to prevent the holding of a general election, when it is due for the very first time, on the basis of proportional representation, under your Constitution.

"One particularly undemocratic aspect of not holding a general election and extending the term of office of the present Parliament for another six years, will be that the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, whose presidential candidate obtained 39% of the votes cast in the presidential election on a national scale, and who even obtained more votes than you did in several constituencies, will be kept in the position of being in a small minority in Parliament. It will still be a minority in the Opposition, even though it is a political party with the largest

political following in the country in opposition to your Government, as the voting in the presidential election indicated. Thus a disproportionate majority for your Party will be perpetuated, together with under representation of the people who are opposed to your Government at the present time, in Parliament.

"The Provisional National Committee for a Mass Workers' Party unconditionally upholds the right of the people, including those who may vote for UNP candidates at a general election, to determine the composition of Parliament by election, even within the restricted framework of the present Constitution.

"In view of what we have stated above, we demand that the Government rescind the "State of Emergency" and the "Fourth Amendment", dissolve Parliament and hold a general election."

The Xaverians protest

The majority of members of the Executive Committee of The Xaverians (Sri Lanka Unit of the International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs) have expressed their deep concern over the implications of the Government's decision to hold a referendum to extend the life of the present Parliament up to August 1989. In a statement sent to Saturday Review, they say:-

1. Ordinarily, a referendum is a democratic method by which to ascertain public opinion on a specific matter of national importance or to seek the approval of the people for proposed legislation which the law requires must be approved directly by the people.

2. In the present instance, resort to a referendum is unjustifiable because it is contrary to the spirit of the Constitution of 1978, which the present Government introduced primarily to remedy the infirmities of the previous Constitution (1972), to strengthen and protect the fundamental rights of the citizen and to so change the electoral

system that Parliament could better represent the people's will as expressed at a general election.

3. It was not the intention of the authors of the Constitution to provide for the extension of the present Parliament. That is why a special provision was incorporated in the Constitution to limit the term of the present Parliament, which was elected in July 1977 according to a different electoral system, to a term of six years from 4th August 1977, "and no longer" (Article 161 (e)).

4. Although elsewhere in the Constitution (Article 83 (b)) there is provision for the extension of the term of Parliament by means of specific legislation passed by a special majority and subsequently approved at a referendum, it is clear that provision was not intended to be applicable to the present Parliament, but to a legislature comprising 196 members. In a Parliament of 196 members it will be extremely difficult to secure a two-thirds majority for a measure such as the one proposed.

5. According to the view of the majority of the members of the Supreme Court, the terms of reference of the Fourth Amendment Bill precluded the Court from examining the Bill for its constitutionality because the reference limited its jurisdiction. Three other judges dissented from this view.

6. The attempt to extend Parliament's term by a further six years goes counter to an oft-repeated public pledge given by leaders of the present Government that it would not postpone the general election that is due in 1983 even by a single day.

7. The right to periodic elections is also an obligation to which the Sri Lanka Government has subscribed under Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of the United Nations.

8. To postpone elections until 1989 would be to suspend implementation of the provisions in the Constitution relating to proportional representa-

(Continued next page)

The elite of Singapore's ruling People's Action Party (PAP) has just concluded what is almost certainly its most significant annual meeting for many years—perhaps since the republic achieved full independence in 1965. In redefining itself as a national movement and no longer only a political party, the PAP appeared briefly to have taken a tentative step towards the establishment of a one-party state. However, it was stressed at the conference that the party would remain committed to democratically contested elections.

The November 15 convention of party cadres approved a number of changes in the party constitution — to centralise power within the PAP's upper ranks and reduce the influence of ordinary members. PAP leaders also discarded several party aims left over from the colonial era and effectively replaced them with support for the party itself as the single expression of national aspirations.

A new central executive committee was also elected in which the party's old guard is now significantly outnumbered by the second generation. Both of Singapore's deputy prime ministers, Goh Keng Swee and S. Rajaratnam, were among those who stepped down from the committee. Four new members were elected.

Some of the constitutional amendments, including the redefinition of the party, were disclosed in the government-supervised press earlier this month. Since then the government has permitted the republic's leading English-language daily, *The Straits Times*, to suggest openly that the party's rank and file has been dropped as a political force and that the new constitution may be intended to prepare for the elimination of political opposition. The publication of these articles prior to the party

Singapore: Flying a one - party kite

convention has been interpreted in Singapore as being of considerable significance—chiefly as a test of public reaction. Of the three journalists responsible for the articles, at least one is thought to be a PAP cadre himself.

It now appears that the possibility of a one-party state being established by the PAP may have been raised publicly to allow party leaders explicitly to dismiss it at the cadres' convention. "How can we have free, fair and open elections if we have a one-party state?" asked Trade and Industry Minister Tony Tan, who is the party's assistant secretary-general. "The notion is absurd," he added. Nonetheless, the party appears to have recognised it as a logical conclusion to draw from the redefinition and the long-term political implications of the PAP's new identity remain an outstanding question.

Chief among the changes in the party structure is the elimination of the membership's right to attend party congresses and to vote on proposed party resolutions. Party congresses, previously mandatory every two years are now to be held only "whenever the central executive committee deems it necessary...and with such agenda as the central executive committee shall determine." The new constitution will also require all supporters of party resolutions to be identified in writing to the secretary general. Resolutions previously required only the support of 5% of the cadre membership.

These changes are viewed

by many observers as the final step in a reorganisation of the PAP that began in the late 1950s. At that time the most serious challenge facing Lee Kuan Yew and his party supporters was from the PAP's leftwing, which controlled some three-quarters of the party's rank and file. In 1958 Lee introduced the

the ruling party. In this the new constitution is being seen as one of numerous steps taken recently in preparation for the transfer of power to a younger generation of leadership. Moreover, it suggests the leadership remains concerned that the so-called second generation has not yet acquired sufficient political

the newly defined PAP the republic's only legal political organisation seemed officially open to question before the convention. Having allowed the question of a one-party state to surface in the press, the party elite countered it decisively at their convention. But, as *The Straits Times* noted before the con-

by

Patrick Smith

Courtesy: *Far Eastern Economic Review*

cadre system and eliminated the PAP as a mass organisation. Since then cadres alone have elected the party leadership—and the leadership has chosen the cadres.

The further consolidation of party power among cadres—and more specifically within the 14-member central executive—is a further attempt to guard against the emergence of a dissident movement within

experience.

Founded in 1954, the party is reliably estimated to have some 9,000 ordinary members at present. The number of cadres is not disclosed, but a former party member said recently there are an average of four or five for each of Singapore's 75 constituencies—or a total of 3-400.

Whether the government is now preparing to declare

vention, "even if this interpretation is not valid, proclaiming the ruling party as a national movement, by virtue of its pre-eminence, does tend to overshadow and limit, if not belittle, the role of the other political parties." It is unlikely that such comments could be published without the government's prior knowledge.

The Xaverians protest

(Continued from page 6)

tion. This would be tantamount to freezing the choice of the people made in July 1977 for 12 long years. Thereby the body of new voters who were enfranchised after 1977 and who number nearly two million will be disfranchised and a Parliament not of their choice will be imposed on them. Further those who voted in the July 1977 election are now being requested to forgo their right to review the mandate which they gave

their representatives six years ago.

9. The composition of political parties has changed a great deal since July 1977 and new political groups have also emerged. This is added reason why the Parliamentary election that is due in 1983 should be held. Not to do so would be to exclude political minorities and new political groups from the democratic political process.

10. Furthermore, to resort to large-scale nomination of MPs by their party leadership in

lieu of general election would be to undermine the elective principle i.e. the people have the right to elect their representatives, who in turn must be accountable to the people. This is one of the fundamental principles of democracy.

11. In the light of the above-mentioned considerations, to substitute a referendum for an election is morally indefensible and a travesty of democracy, which could lead to discontent, agitation and struggle. The consequent instability would affect the development of the country.

Political Causerie : Have both mother & son

(Continued from page 5)

ber to back him to the hilt. Even a non-party man at the time like Mr. Senanayake made his contribution. Can the same be said of Mr. Bandaranaike? In fact, I have heard it said by many that his campaigning only helped the UNP candidate!

I wish to conclude by reminding both mother and son and other family members with political ambitions what the Father

said in 1958 and which is very relevant to today's situation in the party and the country:

"Our opponents having tried unsuccessfully various methods of discrediting our Government, now seem to be attempting to divide the Government against itself—to show that there were differences between SLFP members of the Government who do not belong to our party, as well as differences within the

SLFP itself. In every way, attempts are made by exaggeration, distortion and misrepresentation, to spotlight these differences and try to bring about a break-up of the Government from within.

"We must be very alert to this campaign that is proceeding and be very careful not to allow it to succeed. It will indeed be a tragedy if, having successfully overcome opposi-

tion and difficulties from outside, we were to succumb to a campaign calculated to create internal disruption from within our own ranks.

"Let us remember that the people of this country, with courage and determination, overthrew a reactionary regime and reposed confidence in us by electing us to power. We must never forget the responsibility we owe to the people of this

country. It is our sacred duty to stabilise and strengthen the victory which the people have gained and of which we are the trustees, so that no occasion may arise in the future for the people to say that, owing to our own differences and weaknesses, we have betrayed them."

If the Bandaranaiques forget their responsibility and role, they will end up in the dust heap of History just as the Bourbons.

LETTERS

History & Eelam

No. 118, Uda Peradeniya,
Peradeniya.

The Editor,
Saturday Review,
Jaffna.

Sir,

In the lengthy articles on "Eelam" that appeared recently in the 'Saturday Review' the author has distorted and ignored some historical facts to justify the demand for a separate state for the Tamils.

To put the record straight let me state the Sinhalese point of view on the demand based on authenticated historical facts.

The Sinhalese (Prince Vijaya and his followers) came to the island from North India some where in the 6th century B.C. and made the island their homeland. At the time there were no Tamils in the island, but only some aborigin tribes, the Nagas and the Yakshas who were definitely not Tamils.

Vijaya became the sole ruler of the island and there was at the time only one State which included the northern and the eastern parts of the island.

In the 3rd century B.C. when the Great Emperor

Asoka was reigning in North India, Buddhism was brought to the island and with it, the island became a Buddhist State, ruled by Sinhalese Kings on the Asokan pattern of North India.

Under the Sinhalese Kings, the island prospered reaching a high state of agricultural development.

The wealth and prosperity of the island attracted the attention of the Tamils of South India, who began to invade the island. Repeated Tamil invasions resulted in the seizure of the northern parts of the island by the Tamils. The present day Jaffna Tamils are the direct descendants of the invaders.

That the northern and eastern parts of the island were originally peopled by Buddhist Sinhalese is easily proved by ancient Sinhalese literature, archaeological evidence, ancient inscriptions and by the large number of Tamilised Sinhalese place names in the north and east.

Therefore the Sinhalese will resist at all costs, even with their blood, the division of the island which is their original homeland.

If the Tamils want to set up a separate State for them, they should do so in South India from whence they came.

The Sinhalese have no ill will towards the Tamils. Having been in the island

for centuries, the Tamils are full citizens of the country just as the Sinhalese and they are entitled to equal rights with the Sinhalese. They are also entitled to that proportionate share in everything (employment in the Public Service, Colonization Schemes, University admissions etc.) to which their numbers entitle them.

Chandrasiri Weerasekera.

Rotary, S.R. and male chauvinism

18/9, Chitra Lane,
Colombo 5,
25.11.82.

The Editor,
Saturday Review.
Sir,

WHY NOT MS. RIGHT?

We are surprised that Saturday Review should have a caption (SR.13.11.82 "JAFFNA ROTARY IS LOOKING FOR MR. RIGHT" (emphasis ours) to announce the Group Study Exchange Award. We are surprised that Rotarians and possibly Saturday Review do not think that even among women there are good many who are exemplary in business and professional aptitudes, personable and enthusiastic about this vocation, articulate and well-informed about this country."

We are equally surprised that Groups like the Rotarians and probably the articulate Editor of Saturday Review have such Male Chauvinistic attitudes even today, even after Sri Lanka has officially signed the Convention at the World Conference of the U.N. Decade for Women in 1980, on the "elimination of all forms of discrimina-

tion against women". We are even more surprised that one should look out only for MR. RIGHT after the National Symposium on Women on the new dimensions of her role where no less an authority than the President himself has made very categorical policy statements on women's issues and that was given wide publicity over the radio and television and by the press both Government and non-government.

We are hurt that the "Unique Opportunity" is denied to MISS/MRS. RIGHT.

However if the rules of the award specifically bar women from applying it is nothing but correct that the S.R. should bring it to the notice of the sponsors to amend the rule and include women applicants as well in the Name of Justice and in the Name of Human Rights.

We fervently hope that S.R. would carry this letter.

VOICE OF WOMEN.

Signed:

SECRETARY/EDITOR
KANTHA HANDA.

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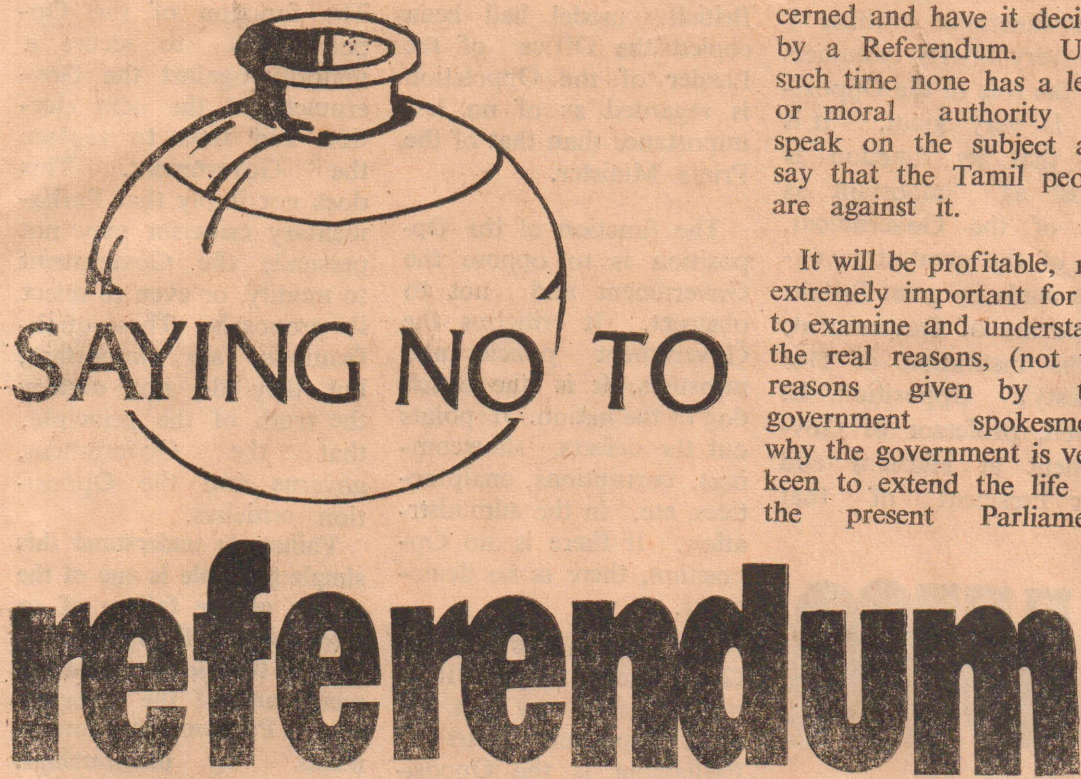
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SAYING NO TO referendum

We have seen during the last few days many articles published in the daily papers in all three languages on the Referendum, which dealt with its history and its value as a democratic process. The question is not whether Referendum is democratic or not, or whether it has merits and demerits. Even that is a debatable question and I shall deal with it later. The real question that should be debated on in this country today is whether the government is justified in passing the fourth Amendment and referring it to the people to decide whether the life of the present Parliament should be extended or not. We have read in the *Saturday Review* the memoranda submitted to the President by the Civil Rights Movement and the Centre for Society and Religion. They have analysed the problem in detail and pointed out the consequences that would flow from the proposal of the government if it met with success.

It would be superfluous if I were to cover the same ground as the two memoranda had done. My purpose in writing this is to argue and prove that the problem is a moral issue and that if the government succeeds, it will end in the subversion of the constitution, undermining of Parliament, destruction of the Opposition and in the enthronement of a despotic government. It is a constitutional issue of far-reaching importance and no amount of skilled propaganda can hide the fact that it is a dangerous move on the part of the government.

From the time of the announcement of the results of the Presidential Election inspired journalists and highly placed government spokesmen

started analysing, dissecting and interpreting the votes polled by the candidates. I do not wish to comment on their analysis of the world records created by the United National Party in the General Election of 1977, and the Presidential Election except to say that the U.N.P. spokesmen are themselves either guilty of the grossest confusion or deliberately attempting to confuse the minds of the people. Obtaining 52.9% of the votes is not an overwhelming victory, if the meaning of the word 'overwhelming' is properly understood. It might have been a surprise and a shock to the U.N.P. stalwarts that their candidate with the prestige of his exalted office, with immense resources at his disposal and with 144 ministers, deputy ministers, district ministers and M.P.s

to campaign, pitted against an opponent from a party in disarray, riven with dissension and internal family feuds, was able to poll only 52.9% of the votes. In a way it is a Pyrrhic victory!

Reference must also be made to one aspect of the analysis of the pro-government statisticians. It has been said by some that the Presidential Election has shown that the Tamil people are not for Eelam, a separate State. It is very difficult to understand the working of their minds. A Presidential or a Parliamentary or a District Council Election is not the one that can determine that question whether the Tamil people are for or against a separate State. The only person in this country who can settle this question is the President himself. He can refer the matter to the people con-

cerned and have it decided by a Referendum. Until such time none has a legal or moral authority to speak on the subject and say that the Tamil people are against it.

It will be profitable, nay extremely important for us to examine and understand the real reasons, (not the reasons given by the government spokesmen) why the government is very keen to extend the life of the present Parliament

without holding elections. If, as the government says, maintaining law and order, peace and security is the reason for postponing elections, we are indeed asked

It will stop a new party balance emerging

by

Subramaniam

to pay a high price for order and security. The country is not at war, now nor is it faced with any grave emergency like a civil war. It is in such circumstances that other countries have postponed elections.

Indeed in U.S.A. the Presidential and Congressional elections were held during the last war when the country was at war with Germany, and Japan. When Great Britain was in mortal danger, the life of parliament was prolonged until 1945, but as soon as Germany was defeated Mr. Attlee insisted that Parliament should be dissolved and General Election held, although Mr. Churchill wanted the National Government to continue till Japan was defeated. The General Election was held in 1945 which resulted in the victory of the Labour

Party.

One of the reasons given by the Government for its decision to postpone election is that the Government should have this big majority in Parliament to ensure a prosperous, just and free society, to continue the development projects already undertaken and to cure the economic ills of the country. In a way by calling a Referendum, the government is asking for a Doctor's Mandate to heal the sick patient. Mr. J. R. Jayawardene will continue as President for six years and even without a two-thirds majority this government can govern the country. It is here the trouble comes.

The real reason for attempting to postpone elections is different from what they have told us. It is here that the 'overwhelming' victory becomes relevant, a victory that I called Pyrrhic. The facts speak

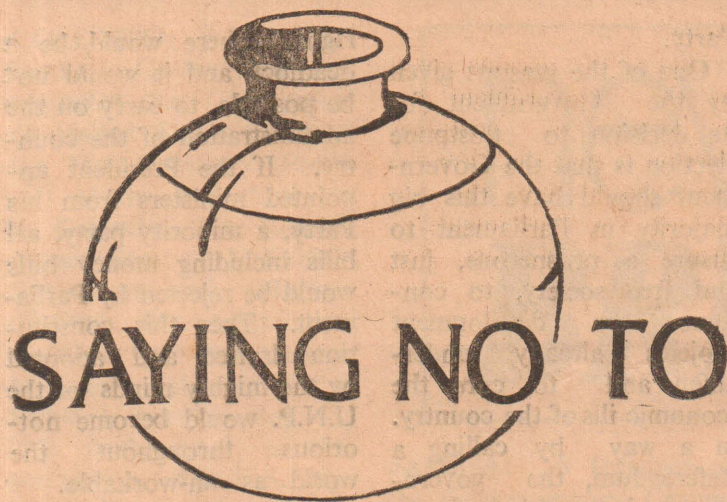
figures—there would be a deadlock and it would not be possible to carry on the administration of the country. If the President appointed ministers from his Party, a minority party, all bills including money bills would be rejected by Parliament. Then this constitution drafted and adopted by the mighty minds of the U.N.P. would become notorious throughout the world as un-workable.

If the Government got a slender majority, the Opposition would be a formidable one which for some unknown reason the Government fears. In case the Government found itself in a minority, the President could dissolve Parliament and ask the people to return his party with a majority, but who could predict things, how the people would react to threats? And the country cannot live on a diet of elections. Who is responsible for drafting such an unworkable constitution? These are the

dangers that the Government is keen to avoid.

It would seem therefore that the well-tryed Westminster model is better than the present one. But certain important changes, should be made in the 1972 constitution. One is that this country should have a Second or Upper Chamber. One of the greatest wrongs done to this country by the former government— whoever was responsible, whether Dr. Colvin K. De Silva or Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike, or both, should take the blame— was abolishing of the Senate. Almost all countries of the world have an Upper Chamber. This country in particular with a heterogeneous population needs one. I am sure our Muslim brethren and Mr. Thondaman too will welcome this idea.

The Composition and powers of a second Chamber
(Continued overleaf)



referendum

(Continued from page 9)

ber are matters of detail. If we had an Upper Chamber, we would not be in this predicament today, facing a Referendum which is like a monster with a gargantuan appetite, ready to swallow every vestige of democratic institutions. If the second Chamber had continued to exist, the U.N.P. leaders, when they drafted a new one, might probably have provided for one. This is a matter which should be discussed in a separate article.

It is now clear that the country would come under a despotic government, if the life of this Parliament is prolonged. Why is the Government fighting shy of a General Election? Unfortunately we have a constitution which is a queer mixture, a hotch-potch of American, British and French models. It is that that has contributed to the Governments' predicament and our anxiety. Any way we have both a Presidential and a Parliamentary government. The President is not in Parliament as in U.S.A., but all the ministers, unlike in U.S.A., are from Parliament. That is why we have a Parliamentary Government. Even in the 19th century Walter Bagehot said party is inherent in parliamentary government, "it is bone of its bone and breath of its breath." We have today two major parties, UNP and SLFP. Party government is the vital principle of representative government. Therefore, it is necessary we should have two strong parties.

Let me discuss as briefly as possible, the functions of Parliament and the role of the Opposition in it. The relevance of this topic for my argument is that the President is keen to have a captive Parliament

and a feeble, weak and impotent Opposition. Parliament is the forum of debate and discussion; "It is a grand inquest of the nation"; 'A Congress of opinions'. It is a debating assembly; it legislates, that is, makes laws for the country. It is there that the ventilation of grievances takes place. It is also there that MPs extract information from ministers, information about the activities of the government. This process of questioning brings the work of departments of state into the public view. It makes them realise that they are functioning under a close public scrutiny. Such questions may reveal a defective state of affairs. This may necessitate inquiries by select committees or Commissions. It is a great safeguard against the vices of bureaucracy. Parliament also performs a function known as selective function which is of great relevance today to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. This function is of pivotal importance.

It is in Parliament members make a reputation. It is the selective function of Parliament to bring to the notice of Party leadership men who can render their services to their parties. Now S.L.F.P. has only about six members. If a General Election is held it is very likely that this party may have about eighty members in Parliament. Out of these eighty some may, by their performance, qualify themselves for high office as ministers. A future President or a Prime Minister may be found among them. They are brought to the limelight by their ability and performance. If the life of Parliament is extended the S.L.F.P. will be denied the opportunity to find political leaders, for political leaders are found inside and not outside Parliament.

In the performance of these functions which I have very briefly enumerated the role of the Opposition is very great. It is said that its function is almost as important as that of the Government. One of the greatest inventions made by great Britain in the art of Government, is the institution of Her Majesty's Opposition. L. Lowell, professor of Government at Harvard and later President of that

University, wrote in his book, 'Government of England' "His Majesty's Opposition embodies the greatest contribution of the 19th century to the art of Government". Today we see in this Country an attempt to destroy this great invention. In the British Constitution and in

all countries where the British model had been copied the Office of the Leader of the Opposition is regarded as of no less importance than that of the Prime Minister.

The function of the Opposition is to oppose the Government and not to obstruct. It criticizes the Government policies and measures. It is the watch dog of the nation. It points out the defects, shortcomings, corruptions, malpractices, etc. in the administration. If there is no Opposition, there is no democracy.

Jennings in his Cabinet Government says; "It is not untrue to say that the most important part of Parliament is the Opposition in the House of Commons. The function of Parliament is not to govern but to criticise. Its criticism too, is directed not so much towards a fundamental modification of the Government's policy as towards the education of public opinion. The Government's majority exists to

support the Government. The function of the Opposition is to secure a majority against the Government at the next election and thus to replace the Government. This does not imply that Parliamentary criticism may not persuade the Government to modify, or even to reject its proposals. These qualifications are important, but they do not destroy the truth of the principle, that the Government, governs and the Opposition criticises.

Failure to understand this simple principle is one of the causes of the failure of so many of the European progeny of the Mother of Parliaments and of the supersession of Parliamentary governments by dictatorships. A strong Opposition is a safeguard against the worst form of corruption. A Government can learn more from the criticism of its opponents than from the eulogy of its supporters. To stifle that criticism is at least ultimately to prepare for its own destruction.

(To be continued)

Why C.R.M. opposes the Referendum - 4

(Continued from S. R. Nov. 20 '82)

he was confident that if it secretly plotted unlawful, extra-parliamentary action again, the security forces of the State were capable of handling the matter. Nor did he think they should be banned from participating in elections or entering Parliament. The JVP is now a recognised political party, it contested and won seats in several districts in the recent Development Council Elections. The leader of JVP, Mr. Rohana Wijeweera, was indeed one of the candidates in last month's presidential election.

12. The alleged plotters in the SLFP must surely be demoralised after the presidential election results. If, however, they continue their activities in the future the President already has an excess of weapons at his command (including the draconian Prevention of terrorism Act to which the government has not hesitated to resort when it thinks fit to deal with them

13. The President has said he wants to give the democratic forces within the SLFP a chance to regain authority. Why, then, does he not wait to see

what happens to the SLFP in the next few months, instead of rushing through a six year extension of Parliament well before the election is due? Is it because he thinks it will take nearly seven years from now for the SLFP to put its house in order to his satisfaction?

14. The fate of the parliamentary representation of the SLFP should be decided by the voters at an election and nobody else. Moreover, other parties now not represented in Parliament should not be denied the opportunity of contesting the general election due next year.

15. Finally, it must be said that although the President has acted on the basis that the information received by him is true, other people may doubt its reliability. They may feel it is unlikely that in the midst of a strenuous election campaign for which the SLFP was admittedly unprepared, the leadership could have planned assassinations and the setting up of a military government. They may also feel it unlikely that such a plot would have been hatched to take place in the event not of a defeat but of a victory.

16. As pointed out in paragraph 4, general elections have been held in the past notwithstanding the assassination of a Prime Minister in 1959, and the pendency of the 1962 coup trial. Furthermore, despite police reports of a serious insurgent threat in 1970, detailed in the well known "Attygalle dossier", the then Prime Minister Mr. Dudley Senanayake duly held the general election of 1970.

17. For these reasons, it is regrettable for the democratic tradition and image of our country, to postpone elections for six years, and moreover to rush through such a measure by resort to an immediate referendum well before an election is due. It is not fair by the opposition nor indeed by the government itself.

18. Above all, it is not fair by the people. The people have a right to know and assess truth of this grave and alarming allegation, free from any suspicion that it is being used as an expedient to avoid a general election.

CRM, 16/1, Don Carolis Rd., Colombo 5.

Desmond Fernando,
Secretary

Gandhiyam & Red Barna

(Continued from page 2)

Barna and the Christian Churches became very important in the rehabilitation of the displaced estate workers.

One would ask why the Government and the monopolist Southern Press while lauding the "Sarvodaya" activities are taking an active part in defaming similar movements which are actively helping the Tamil-speaking people who were victims of the several communal riots and cyclone. Is this part and parcel of the oppressive activities taking place in Sri Lanka?

According to the report of the MIRJE delegation to Vavuniya which visited there on the 21st and 22nd March, 1982 they found

that on several occasions the Army and Police have not only harassed, humiliated and insulted the affected people, but also have suggested to them to transfer their loyalty to the Sarvodaya of Dr. Ariyaratne.

So far "Sarvodaya" movement of Dr. Ariyaratne has not denounced the activities of the Army and Police in the above manner nor dissociated themselves from the suggestions of the forces to these refugees. This is really an unfortunate precedent.

The new phase of the discrediting of the community development organizations involved in the Tamil-speaking areas has been started last week with

baseless accusations on Red Barna. The same accusations of alleged links with the "terrorist movement" which was used to defame Gandhiyam is now extended to the Red Barna Unit functioning in Batticaloa District.

One could understand if Hon. Minister Devanayagam does not like the faces of some of the Jaffna officers working in Red Barna, but no one will forgive him if he is trying to discredit or destroy the activities of Red Barna in the Batticaloa District because of his anti-Jaffna attitude. And also the Minister should know that Red Barna is not a Board of Directors of a co-operative society in his own electorate for him to handle as he wishes.

Most of the Funding Agencies, have had enough experience with racist and oppressive governments of the other third world

countries to understand the motives and the background of this tarring campaign directed against them.

20 Trade Unions call for united campaign against Referendum

Twenty Trade Union Organizations headed by the Government Clerical Service Union have called upon "the entire working class, all minorities including Tamil nationals, peasants, students, youth and the broad poverty stricken masses to do everything possible to defeat the proposal of the UNP Government to hold a referendum to postpone the parliamentary election and establish capitalist dictatorship. The

course of action to be taken in this connection will be made public in due course.

The Trade Unions have also called upon the Government to withdraw the Emergency immediately and have condemned "the steps taken by the UNP Government to ban meetings and newspapers under the cover of the islandwide Emergency that has been proclaimed with the Presidential Elections".

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS DAY
34th ANNIVERSARY
 OF
THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
NATIONAL CONVENTION
 ON 10TH DECEMBER, 1982, AT 3.00 P. M.
 AT
THE NEW TOWN HALL
COLOMBO - 7.

"The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of Government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures."

Declaration of Human Rights: Article 21 (3)

Dear Rev. Sir
 Sir/Madam

We have pleasure in inviting you to participate or send delegates of your organisation to the **NATIONAL CONVENTION** to commemorate **UN Human Rights Day on 10th December, 1982 at 3-00 p m. at THE NEW TOWN HALL COLOMBO 7.**

SPONSORED BY:

- Centre for Society and Religion
- Christian Workers' Fellowship
- Devasarana Development Centre
- Human Rights Organisation
- Movement for the Defence of Democratic Rights
- Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality
- Vimukthi Dharma Kendra

" WE SHALL PROTECT OUR RIGHT TO ELECT OUR OWN MPs "

PRINS RAJASOORIYA
 THE SECRETARY,
 CONVENTION COMMITTEE,
 (MIRJE OFFICE)
 6, ALOE AVENUE,
 COLOMBO 3.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Jaffna lawyers call for repeal of the Terrorism Act

The following Resolution was Unanimously passed by the Jaffna Branch of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka on 1.12.1982 presided over by Mr. S. R. Kanaganayagam President:-

"The Bar Association of Sri Lanka (Jaffna Branch) views with concern the manner of arrest and detention of citizens throughout Sri Lanka in general and the Northern and Eastern Provinces in particular by the Police and Armed Forces purporting to act under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act No. 48/1979; and while condemning violence

in any form or from any quarter demands the repeal of the said Act more particularly the obnoxious provisions viz Sections 9,10,16,17 and 23 which give unlimited power to the Executive and make serious inroads into the liberty of the citizens and the authority of the courts: and reiterates that the normal law of the land viz: the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure are quite adequate to deal with the situation.

"And urges His Excellence the President and the Cabinet of Ministers to deal with the detainees according to the normal law of the land"

Alleged Army 'informer' found shot dead

Thirty-year old K. Velayutham (Thevan) of Panda terrupu was called out from his home on the night of Thursday by some youths. Next morning, he was found dead with gunshot injuries on his head, on a spot nearly two miles away, close to the

Paralay temple.

A letter in Tamil is reported to have been found beside his body which stated: Let this be a warning to all Army informers. The letter written on an ordinary exercise book paper was signed Liberation Tigers.

'They mixed up Eelam with the Tigers': Priest's story

(Continued from page 1)

again asked them the reasons for the order to search my house and bring me to Gurunagar and protested regarding the humiliating manner in which the whole operation was shamefully performed. There was still no direct answer.

They asked me about the cassettes. I said they contained Christian devotional songs and one cassette on Tamil National Songs. Are they like our national anthem or are they Eelam songs? I said that the Tamils have a very long heritage of national songs and that there is nothing wrong in being proud about one's race, language, culture and songs. It became obvious to me that they were all confused and mixed up about Tamil

nationalism, terrorism, Eelam, Tamil Eelam, separatism and Tigers. The word "Eelam" seems to conjure in their minds tigers and terrorists while for Tamils who use "Tamil Eelam" it connotes their national aspirations. I told them boldly not to mix up Tamil nationalists and terrorists. The two are quite different as light from darkness.

They took away about 50 Christmas cards from my residence and began questioning me on them. One officer asked me "now do you know father why you were brought here? Still I do not know. The cards were found later" I said, "I do not know the reasons for the search and order to arrest". "How did you get these cards and why did you

keep them and not hand over to the police? Don't you realize that they are subversive and dangerous, associated with terrorists?" I said I received a parcel of these cards in November last year like other parcels which I receive. I never thought them dangerous. There is a map of Ceylon with the Tamil areas marked. There is a picture of Christ and a verse in English and Tamil refer to social problems. After my reply they all seemed puzzled about why I was brought.

At about 8.00 p.m. on Tuesday I approached an officer and said I would like to have some sleep as I hadn't a wink of sleep the previous night and I have pressure for which I had not brought my medicines. "What pressure?" bawled out the officer in the presence of everybody. "What about our pressure when police officers are shot at and killed by your people?" I went back to my seat and was silent.

(To be continued)

ONE LAKH TAMILS IN NORTH AND EAST PROTEST

About 100,000 people were involved in protest marches and fasting in various centres all over the Northern and Eastern Provinces on Tuesday, the 30th of November, calling for the release of the Clergy and the Nithiyanthan couple, the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and the withdrawal of the Armed Forces from the North.

Though the day of non-violent protest was chiefly organised by two dynamic youth groups—the Student Council of the Jaffna University and the General Union of Eelam Students

and the Christian Clergy, participation transcended Religious, Caste, Party and even Racial differences. As it was a Poya holiday school children of both sexes were seen in their hundreds in many centres. Though most of the centres were Christian Church compounds, hymns and prayers of Islamic and Hindu religions too were sung here. Sit-ins were also held in Hindu temples. Several University Professors, lecturers and their families were present at the whole day fast at the Veeramahali Amman Temple at Nallur.

The significant feature of

the day's programme was that the organization and arrangements were done by the people themselves without any direct involvement of the recognised political parties. But the TULF MPs as well as Senior Members of the TELF, SLFP and NSSP joined the sit-ins in many centres.

One of the biggest gatherings in Jaffna was at the St. Mary's Cathedral where the fast started at 7 a.m. Most of the TULF MPs and Members of the Municipal Council joined the protest here. At 1 p.m. in the afternoon the people started a long silent protest march through the main streets, holding placards and posters and reached the Cathedral back at 2.30

p.m. At 4.30 p.m. the closing service started first with an Islamic observance followed by Hindu chanting and ending with the Christian prayers.

St. James Church was another key centre where the Human Rights Security Council consisting of 15 organizations, and many progressive Sinhalese youth were seated. With the ringing of the Church bells at 12 noon, the people here started a long procession wearing black badges and holding posters.

At Kilinochchi the sit-in was held at St. Theresa's Church. More than thousand people joined the protest march that began at Kilinochchi Maha Vidyalaya. Most of the shops

in this area remained shut the whole day.

At Mannar, the fast was held in three key centres: St. Sebastian's Church, St. Mary's Church and St. Anthony's Church. The Clergy, school children and mothers wore black badges and sang hymns.

At Vavuniya hundreds joined in the fast which began at 8 a.m. in the Church of the Holy Spirit which is the parish of Rev. Dr. Donald Kanagaratnam who too had been arrested earlier by the Police. In the late morning a jeep-load of armed soldiers went to the Church and inquire 'What is going on here?' Rev. Dr. Kanagaratnam gave a lucid explanation of the reasons for the fast, after which the jeep left